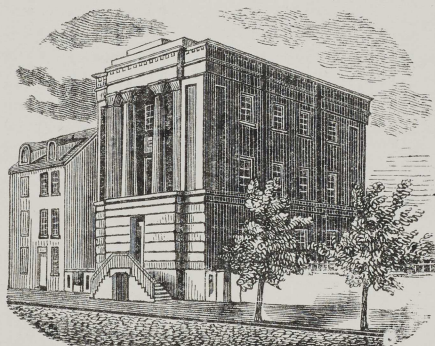


AN ESSAY ON

Cynanche Trachealis,

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE



HOMOEOPATHIC MEDICAL COLLEGE

OF PENNSYLVANIA,

*On the 30th. day of January, Eighteen Hundred and
Fifty-six.*

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Of Lewiston Falls Maine.*

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Cynanche Trachealis in its pathology exhibits general principles of agreement in the acceptance of which most, if not all concur.

Its name seems plainly to inculcate that it is an affection of the trachea, and the symptoms, which are early developed in its forming stage, seem strongly to point to the fact, that in its nature it is inflammatory. Although its pathological nomenclature would seem to limit it to the trachea itself,

yet the decision of practical observation gives it a wider range, a more diffusive influence upon the surrounding organs.

Whether the specific symptoms are, or are not synchronous with the first symptoms of indisposition.

It will generally, if not universally hold true, that more or less strongly marked symptoms of active inflammation will supervene; and these denotements of inflammation will present themselves to the cognizance of the senses, through their accustomed channels.

As tenderness of the trachea on pressure, apparent swelling, and the production of cough, upon the slightest contact of any foreign agent, as pressure of the finger, a drop of water, or crumb of bread. And it is well known that full proof of the existence of an inflammatory affection in this disease, has been deduced, from the developments of those internal scenes, as revealed by the scalpel of the

Anatomist. And probably the spasmodic action of the muscles in the vicinity of the glottis, is the effect of the continuous inflammation, irritation or sympathy,

The almost entire immunity from the invasion of genuine Croup enjoyed by adults, well nigh endorses the conclusion, that it is a disease, which is the peculiar inheritance of childhood and youth - Notwithstanding its obvious preference, or more frequent occurrence among the tender buds of infancy and blooming youth;

Yet not unfrequently it measures its strength, in fearful contest, with the strength and symmetry of mature age, and occasionally finds

a victim in the thinned ranks of old age,

The reason why it is of so much more frequent occurrence during infancy and childhood, than in advanced age, may be because in the former, there may be an aptitude for the disease, dependent in part, if not altogether upon a certain condition of the blood peculiar to this age, and a peculiar condition or conformation of the Glottis, Larynx, or trachea - which receives a continued increasing power of resisting such an invasion, up to the period of maturity, and perhaps even advanced age,

And aside from the causes which may exist in the individual organization or family habit or idiosyncrasy, there are

others more distinctly operative: some of a sectional character, such as moist, marshy localities: But perhaps the principal exciting cause of this disease, is cold or sudden vicissitudes of atmospheric temperature, hence its more general prevalence during the damp, and cold seasons of the year, and its absence during the warmth and drouth,

The prognosis of this disease is modified by many contingences, even under the most favorable circumstances, it may be considered as involving many uncertainties in reference to its termination. A healthy subject, a timely application of remedies judiciously selected, ensures the greatest certainty of a favorable issue. Its diagnosis for the most part is distinct and easily recognised, declaring in unmistakable terms, its true nature and intention, yet there are cases where

its invasion is insidious and stealthy, mimicking a slight Catarrh, making its nightly visits, but, lest its continuance might excite alarm - retires at morning dawn; only to gain new strength, and to the friends disguise; on the subsequent night to assail anew its devoted victim, and thus by alternate advance and retreat, it makes a gradual progress upon the object of its attack, until at last, it gains full possession, and now develops all its varied accompaniments, in full formed symptoms of Croup -

The slight chills of the early stage are succeeded by a high heat of the surface, pulse frequent and hard, thirst with extreme restlessness, the cough instead of being slight, becomes laborious, difficult and dry, the inspirations which immediately follow the cough are long and stridulous

which is the most striking characteristic of this disease. Also there is a peculiar and urgent disposition in the patient to throw the head back, thereby in obedience to the instincts of its nature to secure a more free admission of air to the lungs.

But in other cases the invasion is not so formal, for many times the quiet slumbers of the peaceful household have been suddenly dissipated by the strange and unsuspected development of this disease;

As evinced by the little one just before in peaceful rest, now struggling in fearful uncertainty, with restless tossing, cough of specific hoarseness and metallic note, or as Watson says resembling that which would be occasioned by coughing through a brazen trumpet. Also there is a rapid development of fearful symptoms, all

betokening an approaching crisis, of a fearful, because fatal nature, and as a product of the advancing disease new symptoms are developed or superinduced upon those already cited.

The usual and necessary supply of air being refused admission to the lungs, the blood fails of becoming duly arterialised, causing the tumid and livid appearance of the countenance. Also that peculiar expression of anxiety; the pulse becomes feeble and irregular, a cold, clammy sweat breaks out upon the body, the extremities become cold, the cough less frequent and muffled, the voice sinks to a whisper and is lost, the child tosses about in great distress, gasping for breath, seising upon objects around it, the head thrown back, the nostrils widely dilated,

the powers of life gradually giving away,
and as the result of congestion, death by
suffocation or apoplexy closes the scene,

Such is an outline, though
imperfect, indeed of the history, diagnosis,
prognosis and symptomatic progress
of this fearful disease, from its invasion
to its close,

But in the more favorable cases,
whether rendered so by nature or art,
then occurs during the progress of the
disease an amelioration or change of
the symptoms. The febrile excitement
abates, there is a gentle diffusive
perspiration over the body, the dry
shrill cough is mollified, and soon
some little expectoration appears as
induced by the theory of the loosened
shreds of the plastic lymph, which

have been accumulating within the trachea, an exudation consequent upon a specific inflammation,

the general denotements are now more encouraging, the disease has been successfully invaded in its strong hold, by nature or the remedial agents which nature has accepted.

the oppressed powers of nature rally to the rescue, the recuperative energies of the system are strengthened in the progressive work, convalescence is continuous, and health is restored.

Treatment. The remedies which have been used most extensively in croup, and upon which the greatest reliance has been placed are, Aco. Hepar sulf. Spongia & Lachesis.

yet there are others which have been used with advantage according to the complication

of the disease viz. Ars. Bell. Brom. Bry.
Canth. Cham. Cup. Iros. Spec. Kali-bi, Phos.
Samb. Sulp & Stib.

Aconite is especially called for in
the first stage or during the inflammatory
period, when there is great nervous & vascular
excitement, thirst, febrile heat, short and
dry cough, with laborious breathing.

Hoepar may be used when the febrile
symptoms are partially subdued, the skin
has become moist, the cough loosened and
the respiration freer, yet loud & grating, or
when from the beginning there is febrile symptoms,
the cough continual & suffocative, attended
with constant rattling of mucus.

Spongia This may be used after Aco, when
the symptoms of croup yet remain, there
being more or less moisture of the skin, cough
rough & crowing, respiration slow & difficult
with the head thrown back & threatening suffocation.

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